

Dewan's reply.—In regard to the opening of Form IV in the Ettumanur English school, I will have the matter examined by the Director along with similar applications for other schools.

As for a dispensary at Pampadi, it is not a populous place, and, therefore, I doubt whether a dispensary is necessary there. The Darbâr Physician will be asked to inspect and report.

Member.—A bi-weekly dispensary at least is necessary.

Dewan.—There is no use in opening a bi-weekly dispensary. Beyond entailing expenditure on account of travelling allowance to the Medical Officer it will not serve any other purpose.

As regards the ginger farm, steps are being taken. As for instituting a prize for finding out a remedy for the coconut palm disease, the Director of Agriculture will be asked to report.

157. Public Services.

Mr. Matevan Krishnan (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) suggested that, in the matter of recruitment to the public service, better encouragement might be afforded to persons who had passed the Vernacular School Leaving Examination. At least 50 per cent. of the clerical appointments in civil and criminal courts, taluk cutcherries, etc., might be thrown open to them, as most of the work to be transacted in those offices would be in Malayalam. A knowledge of the Malayalam language should be insisted upon as a necessary qualification in the case of all officers, and all correspondence except in very exceptional instances should be carried on in Malayalam.

Among the particular departments referred to by the Member was the Survey Department, in the case of which he suggested the abolition of the entrance examination now held for candidates applying for training in survey. Most of the departments were exceedingly lax in the despatch of business, and as an example of that common defect, the Member pointed out the undesirable delay caused by the Department of Public Works in regard to the construction of a culvert at the Koliakottu *ela*.

In regard to the Police Department, the Member suggested that the statement of departmental punishments published by the Commissioner of Police should show also the details of cases in which such punishments were inflicted for corruption and torture. The other departments might also usefully follow the Police Department in the matter of publishing statements of punishments.

The Member said that suitable encouragement was not being given to the clerks in the several branches of the public service. He particularly suggested that graduate clerks in the Secretariat might be given suitable training and then appointed as Excise or Police Inspectors, etc. In dealing with the Judicial Department, the Member referred to the inconvenience caused to the litigant public by the ministerial establishment. He also disapproved of the present system of court inspection during the vacation and represented that there should be a Code of Inspection. In spite of the control exercised by the High Court, there was inordinate delay in the disposal of cases by judicial officers. While at one time the pendency of suits for over a year or two was a rarity, at present cases of 4 and 5 years' pendency were common and at that rate it might be expected that a day would soon arrive when cases over 8 and 10 years old would be left undisposed of. The Member also complained of delay on other grounds which seriously interfered with the prompt and efficient administration of civil justice. In conclusion, the Member requested that greater attention might be devoted to the recruitment of judicial officers and to their promotion after entertainment.

Mr. Narayanan Raman (Member, Chirayinkil Taluk) dwelt upon the necessity for excluding all non-Travancoreans from the service of the State. Public service was one of the chief means of livelihood for the people, and it stood to reason that qualified men in the State should be entertained in the State service itself. The history of appointments in the public service of Travancore showed abundant proof of the undesirable consequences of the importation of foreigners as Dewahs. The Member referred to the appointments of some of the past Dewans and pointed

out how each administration was responsible for the accretion of the foreign element in the service. He also stated that each foreign Dewan made it a point to levy new taxes without knowing the economic and other conditions of the State. He complained that men of acknowledged merit in Travancore were not receiving adequate encouragement at the hands of the Government and suggested that all appointments should in future at least be restricted to Travancoreans. To secure that, he also represented that it was highly necessary to create an Executive Council to give the necessary help and advice to the Government.

Mr. P. K. Joseph (Member, Trading Classes, Kayankulam) reiterated most of the statements made by the previous speakers and urged the extreme need for Government devoting its special attention to the eradication of corruption from the State service. It was not a matter in which specific instances could be given with a view to prove the truth of the allegations made. No one, the Member thought, would deny the existence of corruption, which was prevalent in the various grades of the public service, and if those who made the allegations failed to prove their cases, it should not be presumed solely on that ground that the evil complained of did not exist. It was, however, for the Government to find out cases of corruption and deal with them severely so as to purify the service as far as possible. The best method of tracking the corrupt officials was to employ a staff of detectives to shadow them and expose them with a view to get them punished. In view of the fact that so many members of the Assembly had dealt with the subject, it was time that the Government took some effective steps to stop that canker in the public service.

Mr. K. Gopala Panikkar (Member, Municipal Council, Kayankulam), in dealing with the question of recruitment to the public service, emphasised the evils of importing foreigners into the service of the State. The foreigners so imported had, in the first place, but scanty knowledge of the habits, customs, needs and language of the people. They were also anxious to dole out favours to their followers whom they entertained in the ranks of the subordinate service. A foreigner would, besides, involve the State in financial commitments with foreign firms and companies. Those evils were aggravated in the case of officers whose services were temporarily lent by the British Indian Government. Those officers would naturally favour the Government of India at the expense of the welfare of the State. The importation of foreigners meant, in addition, much expenditure that would be otherwise avoidable. It could not at all be argued that the people of the State could be excluded from the State service on the score of incompetency. The principle of Travancore for Travancoreans had to be recognised and the provisions of the T. S. R. should be so revised as to rigorously prohibit the importation of foreigners except in special cases necessitating the consultation of foreign experts on technical matters.

The Member then spoke about the principle of communal representation in the public service and suggested the formation of a standing committee of the Legislative Council, so as to secure a fair distribution of appointments among the various communities, consistently with their numerical strength, educational advancement, etc.

Mr. Sankaran Madhavan Pillai (Member, Vaikam Taluk) prefaced his representation with a general observation that a spirit of hearty co-operation between the Government and the governed was an essential requirement for efficient administration. But, of late, that spirit was conspicuously absent in Travancore as could be seen from the sentiments expressed both in the press and on the platform, for which the officers of the Government were to blame. The extreme secrecy with which affairs were being conducted in public offices was the root cause of the evil. Another cause was the entertainment of foreigners in the State service, who could have no abiding interest either in the land or its people. A third, and perhaps, the most potent cause was the policy of communal representation adopted by the Government in making recruitments to the service, which, the Member thought, was extremely undesirable. What was more, the policy, as at present adopted, was neither effective nor equitable in its application, since all communities in the State were not properly represented. He attempted to show by comparative statistics how the Nairs

who, in point of population, education and tradition occupied the foremost rank among the numerous communities in the State took only the third place in the total number of appointments held, whereas the non-Malayala Brahmins who formed but 2 per cent. of the Hindu population were given the largest number of places, out of all proportion to their numerical importance, and the Christians came next in rank. The condition of Ezhavas and Mahomedans was bad enough, but not so bad as that of Nairs. Not one of the many England-returned men in the community who had not been a Government scholar had been hitherto given any encouragement. The Member in that connection represented that the Government should have examined the equity involved in the appointment of an ordinary barrister-at-law on Rs. 400, at a leap, while more Nair Barristers than one who were also graduates in arts were left to vegetate on Rs. 150 or Rs. 200. He referred also to what he thought to be the unmerited retirement of two Nair officers and the appointment of a Brahmin to the place of one of them, as also to the selection of a Brahmin Deputy President for the Legislative Council, as instances in point. Those and similar disabilities suffered by the Nairs were pointed out by the Member as tending to create great unrest among the members of that community.

Such a policy of unequal and inadequate communal representation, if communal representation there was to be, would hardly be anything but detrimental to the best interests of the State. The wrong policy adopted in the matter of recruitment to the higher service was occasionally leading to the appointment of undeserving individuals of questionable integrity and doubtful efficiency to responsible places by whom the official atmosphere was generally vitiated and the prosperity of the State impaired through the consequential discontent among the people. That ought not to be; and the Member said that, though reluctantly, he would rather advocate communal representation on proper lines than leave things alone.

The Member then criticised what he called the creation and abolition of certain offices just to suit the requirements of particular individuals, and passed on to say that there were many unnecessary appointments among those newly created.

He thought that the Survey and the Land Revenue Departments could, with advantage, be amalgamated and the post of either the Tahsildar or the Assistant Tahsildar abolished. The complete separation of revenue and magisterial functions was also suggested as well as the desirability of raising the pay of Poverthicars and *paku-thi* accountants.

He next advocated a general retrenchment of hands in the various departments and certain other analogous changes. The pay and strength of the College Professors and school masters could be greatly reduced and the minimum pay of vernacular school teachers fixed at Rs. 15. The pay of the D. P. W. officers drawing over Rs. 200 might also be reduced all round in view of the great number of qualified Travancoreans now available for appointment. Turning to the Medical Department, the Member was of opinion that the pay of medical men might be stopped, some sort of allowance being given to them during the first few years of their service. The reason for the drastic reform advocated by him in that direction was that those officers were provided with every facility in the Government hospitals and dispensaries under their charge for building up a large and lucrative private practice. Lastly, the Member thought that the pay of most of the higher officers was exorbitant and said that Travancore did not want any officer drawing more than Rs. 750 excepting the Dewan. The existing high rates of salary formed both the cause and the effect of entertaining foreigners in such large numbers in the State service. The Member then concluded by stoutly opposing the practice of allowing extension of service to retiring officers. He objected to it on principle. He apprehended several evils out of such a policy and said that he preferred such officers to fill the rôle of unofficial advisors to the Government and makers of moderate public opinion. He also protested against the rumoured raising of the age of retirement of superior public servants from 55 to 60.

Mr. *Cheriyatu Paulose Torakan* (Member, Kunnathad Taluk) began by saying that he felt thankful to the Dewan for endeavouring his best to improve the

public service, for having dispensed with the services of Dr. Barker when such services were considered no longer necessary, for having appointed efficient Travancoreans like Messrs. R. Dhanukoti Pillai and I. C. Chacko as heads of departments, and for having effected retrenchments in several directions.

The main defect of the public service of Travancore was the existence of high-paid officials who were both aged and infirm, necessitating the appointment of personal assistants in an increasing number. Officials who were expected to bestow due care and attention were seen to be little more than signing machines. The Member said that the method of recruitment to the public service was another evil. One who was entertained as a clerk in the lowest rung of the public service became a Peishkar when he was 50 years of age, superannuated and destitute of vitality. By a comparison of the officials of Travancore with those of British India and Mysore the Member attempted to show that the retention of old and decrepit officials in Travancore was the main cause of the lack of efficiency in the public service of the State. The Member next proceeded to refer to the communal scramble for appointments which was so much in evidence at the present day. The plea that Christians should not be appointed as revenue officers, because they were not conversant with revenue matters, would not hold water. He had no objection to any reduction being made in the number of Christians in any department of the State service where their number was disproportionately large, provided that they were, at the same time, adequately represented in the departments in which their number was deficient. The Member thought that no one would believe the allegation that Christians were unfit for work in the Revenue Department unless it was actually supported by facts. The fertility of the field of public service was confined to Trivandrum and its suburbs, and to a small extent to Kottayam and to the sons of high Sirkar officials; and the Member regretted that North Travancore was entirely ignored in the matter. None of the taluks of North Travancore were represented on the Economic Development Board, the Kallar Hydro-Electric Committee, etc.

Going back to the subject with which the Member started, he stated that the sufferings of the people consequent on the existence of infirm officials could be easily removed (1) by the institution of a Travancore Civil Service Examination; (2) by the recruitment of only such among those that passed that examination as showed a high standard of efficiency, a list of their names being placed before the Legislative Council for purposes of discussion; (3) by the restriction of the posts of doctors, engineers, etc., to those who passed out with distinction from the University; (4) by the appointment as Munsiffs of only those who secured a first or a second class in the B. L. Examination; and (5) by confining the Civil Service Examination to the natives of Travancore.

Incidentally, the Member pointed out that, according to the Travancore Service Regulations, any one could claim to be a subject of His Highness the Maha Raja and suggested that the article in the T. S. R. defining 'domicile' should be suitably amended, so as to confine recruitment to the public service to those who are really Travancoreans. The Member also thought that the number of Sirkar Vakils could be reduced to an appreciable extent.

The Member next dealt with corruption in the public service. He was glad that the Police Department had improved to a considerable extent, but regretted that certain Assistant Superintendents were still addicted to bribery. In the Munsiffs' Courts, especially in the decree and execution branches, corruption was rampant and nothing could be got done unless the clerks concerned were tipped. In the Excise Department, bribery was practised as a profession by all officers from the Assistant Commissioners downwards. The Member concluded by stating that he heard that a certain officer had been appointed to put down the temperance movement in South Travancore and that he was inducing the people there to drink liquor by offering them money. He requested the Government to ascertain whether that rumour was true and cancel the appointment in question if one such had been made.

Mr. P. S. Mahomed (Member, Nominated) began by saying that the progress and prosperity of a country depended on its wealth and good Government. The existence of a large number of high officers with superior academical qualifications

was of minor importance as compared with the financial stability of the State which could only be secured by the appointment of officers on moderate salaries. The Member concurred with other speakers in their opinion that public service absorbed a major portion of the wealth of the State in the shape of high salaries to officials. He said that there were several unnecessary posts in the service. He was in accord with Mr. Nayanar's view that certain appointments referred to by him in his speech on "Retrenchments in the Public Service" as worthy of abolition might be well be dispensed with. (The excessive expenditure on the public service was attributed by the Member to the recruitment of foreigners in large numbers. If the administration of Travancore was carried on through the agency of her own sons who would work with a spirit of enthusiasm and patriotism on a lower pay than foreigners, the material advancement of the country could be achieved easily. The Member suggested the desirability of issuing a Proclamation or a G. O. to the effect that no Travancorean would be appointed in the State service.

The Member next proceeded to discuss the qualifications requisite for admission to the public service. He considered that graduates were not necessary for the posts of Police Inspector, Excise Inspector, etc., and that those who passed out of the Pleaders Examination with a little physical training would discharge the duties appertaining to such offices better than graduates. The salaries attached to those offices could also be reduced to a considerable extent in that case.

The Member next dealt at great length with the disabilities of qualified Mahomedans in the matter of securing berths in the public service in spite of the G. O. enjoining that preferential treatment should be given to them in that respect. Several Mahomedan young men who had passed the English School Leaving Certificate Examination were without employment. Heads of departments, just with a view to satisfy the community, appointed a few of them in very short vacancies, but left them out of account when long vacancies turned up. The Member observed that there were only 2 or 3 Mahomedan graduates in the public service and that it was a grievance to the community that they were not in any way encouraged. He prayed that the Government might pay particular attention to that matter and remove their grievance. Regarding the G. O. according preferential treatment, the Member's prayer was that stringent instructions might be issued to all heads of departments to act up to it. The number of Mahomedans recruited in the executive and ministerial ranks was very small, especially after the above G. O. came into existence.

Regarding promotions the Member remarked that the Mahomedan employees of the Sanitary and Excise Departments and the Mahomedan graduate clerks of the Secretariat were not given their legitimate promotions at the time of the reorganisation. The Excise Commissioner thought that a certain Mahomedan employee could not be given promotion on the score of his obesity. The Member regretted that even the legitimate claims of Muslims were overlooked, not to speak of preferential treatment.

It was represented that some heads of departments had led Government to believe that Mahomedans were unfit for work. Muslims were as efficient as the members of other communities, if not more, and it was the G. O. enjoining preferential treatment that led to such a false allegation. When a Mahomedan had a claim for promotion and the head of the department wished to favour a non-Mahomedan, the former was considered lazy, useless and uncouth. As a consequence, the Mahomedan employees in the several departments of the State found themselves in a helpless condition. The Member concluded with a prayer that, in the matter of Mahomedan officials, Government should scrutinise the records connected with them and then decide each question on its merits instead of blindly believing what the departmental head had got to say.

158. Appointment of a Committee to investigate and report on corruption in the public service.

Mr. K. Krishna Panikkan (Member, Nominated) spoke about the prevalence of bribery among Government servants. Cases of bribery were extremely difficult to prove as the Penal Code declared the giving of a bribe to be as much an offence as